the status of drinking water in rural habitations covering all aspects on drinking water supply including quality of drinking water. The number of villages suffering from brackish water, excess fluoride, excess iron, etc. will be known in Rajasthan and other States after the final results of the survey become available.

(b) The constant use of drinking water with excess fluoride leads to dental and skeletal fluorosis.

(c) Safe drinking water supply is provided through supply from alternative safe sources or by setting up of defluoridation and desalination plants.

Tax deduction for sponsored research

2243. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Department of Scientific and industrial Research has been designated as the nodal agency to administer tax deduction for sponsored research by industry in National Laboratories; and

(b) if so, the details thereof with reasons for such a move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPTT. OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPTT. OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) The Finance Bill 1993 introduced a weighted tax deduction of 125% for approved sponsored research programmes in approved national laboratories under Section 35 (2 AA) of IT Act.

The Director-General (Income Tax Exemptions) in concurrence with Secretary, Department of Scientific and Indstrial Research is the prescribed authority for approval of sponsored research programes in the national laboratories for the benefit of Weighted Tax Deduction.

Agreement between India and Uzbekistan for promotion of science and technology

2244. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Uzbekistan have agreed to set up an Indo-Uzbek technology centre in Tashkent for promoting cooperation in Science and Technology; and

(b) if so, the details of this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPTT. OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPTT. OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT) AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) Yes, Sir. A joint proposal of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, signed in January 1992 in New Delhi, for setting up an Indo-Uzbek Centre for the promotion of S & T Cooperation in Tashkent by using the available infrastructral facilities of Uzbek institutions and establishments, was duly endorsed by the Indo-Uzbekistan Joint Commission during its meeting held in New Delhi on July 29, 1993.

(b) In setting up of this Centre use will be made of the available infrastructural facilities of Uzbek institutions and establishmets. This Centre shall be a nucleus to promote interaction between the scientists of the two countries and shall work towards the utilisation of S & T capabilities for joint endeavours between the two countries. In the first instance the Centre shall create a data base on the Indian and Uzbek scientists, scientific and technical institutions and such other strengths that already exist.

Appointment of Former Scientific Advisor to Ministry of Defence as Principal Investigator of a project

2245. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

SHRI T. A. MOHAMMED SAQHY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recommended the name of Former Scientific Advisor, Ministry of Defence, to be Principal Investigator of a project to explore comercialisation of technology emanating from National Research Laboratories at the Carnegie University, Pittsburg;

(b) if so, what was the criteria for selection;

(c) what are the terms and conditions of this new appointment;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the UNDP organised a seminar at Bangalore to discuss this issue in February 1992, if so, who were the participants in the seminar;